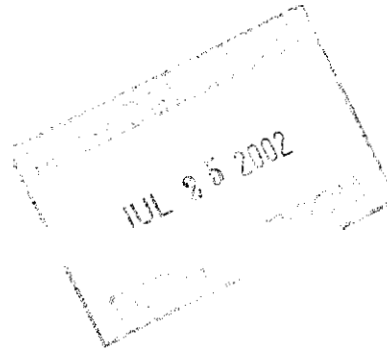




OWENSBORO
MERCY
HEALTH SYSTEM

P.O. Box 20007
Owensboro, Kentucky 42304-0007

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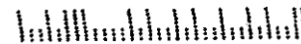


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The Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554



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OWENSBORO MERCY
HEALTH SYSTEM

June 21, 2002

The Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 02-150

Dear Chairman Powell:

On behalf of the Owensboro Mercy Health System, I am writing to express our support of BellSouth's petition to sell long distance service in the state of Kentucky. BellSouth's entry into the long distance market can do nothing but increase the rapidly growing competition that already exists in that industry.

As you know, hospitals must fight rising costs everyday. With the advances in computers and network technology, communications is becoming a more significant cost in our business than ever before. Increased competition in both the long distance and local service markets will reduce rates and improve overall service. We need these benefits now. We need the same benefits realized in the seven states where the FCC has already allowed full competition.

The Kentucky Public Service Commission has unanimously affirmed that BellSouth has met all of the provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and should be allowed to sell long distance service. The benefits of Bell competition in other states have already proven to be significant. Therefore, I request the Commissions' prompt approval of BellSouth's 271 petition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gary Carlson".

Gary Carlson

OMHS - President

cc: Representative Ron Lewis
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Magalie Salas, Secretary FCC